

### *Acts 16:1–5 (CEB)*

Paul reached Derbe, and then Lystra, where there was a disciple named Timothy. He was the son of a believing Jewish woman and a Greek father. <sup>2</sup>The brothers and sisters in Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. <sup>3</sup>Paul wanted to take Timothy with him, so he circumcised him. This was because of the Jews who lived in those areas, for they all knew Timothy's father was Greek. <sup>4</sup>As Paul and his companions traveled through the cities, they instructed Gentile believers to keep the regulations put into place by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. <sup>5</sup>So the churches were strengthened in the faith and every day their numbers flourished.

### *1 Corinthians 4:17 (CEB)*

<sup>17</sup>This is why I've sent Timothy to you; he's my loved and trusted child in the Lord; he'll remind you about my way of life in Christ Jesus. He'll teach the same way as I teach everywhere in every church.

### *1 Timothy 1:1–4 (CEB)*

From Paul, who is an apostle of Jesus Christ by the command of God our savior and of Christ Jesus our hope.

<sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my true child in the faith. Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>3</sup>When I left for Macedonia, I asked you to stay behind in Ephesus so that you could instruct certain individuals not to spread wrong teaching. <sup>4</sup>They shouldn't pay attention to myths and endless genealogies. Their teaching only causes useless guessing games instead of faithfulness to God's way of doing things.

### *2 Timothy 1:1–7 (CEB)*

From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will, to promote the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus.

<sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my dear child. Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>3</sup>I'm grateful to God, whom I serve with a good conscience as my ancestors did. I constantly remember you in my prayers day and night. <sup>4</sup>When I remember your tears, I long to see you so that I can be filled with happiness. <sup>5</sup>I'm reminded of your authentic faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice. I'm sure that this faith is also inside you. <sup>6</sup>Because of this, I'm reminding you to revive God's gift that is in you through the laying on of my hands. <sup>7</sup>God didn't give us a spirit that is timid but one that is powerful, loving, and self-controlled.

*There are supporting actors and then there is the supporting actor.*

Of all the supporting actors who assisted in Paul's work, none are as central as a man named Timothy. The two spent many years and miles together, working to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. Timothy's story is spread across the book of Acts and many of Paul's letters. Here is a lightly-edited Bible dictionary entry on Timothy.

Timothy first appears in Acts 16:1–3 as Paul's disciple whose mother "was a believer; but his father was a Greek" (v 1). He was a third-generation Christian after his mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois (2 Tim 1:5). The apostle Paul, undoubtedly Timothy's spiritual father, refers to him as "my true child in the faith" (1 Tim 1:2); he perhaps converted Timothy on his first or second missionary journey. The son of a Greek (or Gentile) father, Timothy was yet uncircumcised; however, when Paul decided to take Timothy with him on the second journey, he had him circumcised so as not to hinder their missionary endeavors among the Jews.

Timothy, who was well spoken of by the believers at Lystra and Iconium (Acts 16:2), became Paul's companion and assistant on his second missionary journey at Lystra. He traveled with Paul into Europe following the Macedonian vision. When Paul decided to go to Athens, he left Silas and Timothy at Berea to establish the church there (17:14). Timothy and Silas eventually joined Paul in Corinth (18:5). He next appears with Paul in Ephesus on his third journey (19:22), from where Paul sends him into Macedonia ahead of himself. In the last mention of Timothy in Acts 20:4, he was included in the list of goodwill ambassadors who were to accompany Paul to Jerusalem with the offering for the Christian Jews.

Timothy is often mentioned in the Pauline letters. His name is included in the introductory salutations of 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon. Timothy's presence with Paul when he wrote these letters confirms the accuracy of the references to him in Acts. He was in Corinth on the second journey when Paul wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians, at Ephesus on the third journey when Paul wrote 2 Corinthians, and in Rome during Paul's first Roman imprisonment, when he wrote Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. He is mentioned in the introductions of 1 and 2 Timothy as the recipient of those two letters.

In the closing salutations of Romans 16:21, Timothy is listed along with others who send their good wishes to the believers in Rome. In 1 Corinthians 4:17 and 16:10, Paul speaks words of praise for Timothy as he sends him with a message to Corinth (see also Phil 2:19–23; 1 Thess 3:2–6). In 2 Corinthians 1:19 Timothy is named, along with Paul and Silas, as men who were proclaiming the good news about Jesus Christ. Paul put Timothy in charge of the church at Ephesus and wrote him two pastoral letters to help him perform that responsible task.

In Hebrews 13:23 the author (probably not Paul) tells his readers that Timothy had been released from prison, and that he hoped to come with Timothy to visit the readers of that letter. By this note, we know that Timothy experienced imprisonment.<sup>1</sup>

Quite a resume. To sum it up, Timothy was a trusted co-worker of Paul's. Paul once wrote, "I have no one like him . . . like a son with a father he has served with me in the work of the gospel" (Philippians 2:20-22). In the letter, 2 Timothy, Paul urges Timothy to:

. . . continue with the things you have learned and found convincing. You know who taught you.<sup>15</sup> Since childhood you have known the holy scriptures that help you to be wise in a way that leads to salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus.<sup>16</sup> Every scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for showing mistakes, for correcting, and for training character,<sup>17</sup> so that the person who belongs to God can be equipped to do everything that is good. (2 Tim. 3:14-17).

Because of his mother, Timothy had evidently been steeped in the Hebrew Scriptures from a very early age. Paul reminds him that those sacred writings were given to teach him and help him truly live out the Good News. We also need to remember that the writings Paul refers to in these verses is not the entire Bible, but only the Old Testament, for he is writing only 30-35 years after Jesus' death and resurrection.

Nonetheless, the message of salvation begun in the Old Testament had been fulfilled in the gospel, and that is what Timothy is to preach (2 Tim 4:2). Moreover, just as the Jews had a tradition of sacred and inspired writings, so would the Christians, who came to understand that the writings of the Old Testament and the New Testament were inspired by God in a way unlike any other literature. Paul puts this quite bluntly when, in v. 16, he refers to the sacred writings as *theopneustos*, literally "God-

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<sup>1</sup> Elwell, W. A., & Comfort, P. W. (2001). In *Tyndale Bible dictionary* (pp. 1258–1259). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

breathed.” Though the process of inspiration is a mystery,<sup>2</sup> God is the source of the writings that God’s people came to embrace as Scripture.

## Daily Bible Readings

*This week: Timothy . . . and Paul*

**Monday, Acts 16:1-5** Paul meets Timothy and decides to take him on as a helper.

Timothy undergoes circumcision so that he is more acceptable to the Jews.

**Tuesday, 1 Timothy 1:1-11** Timothy’s purpose in Ephesus

**Wednesday, 1 Timothy 6:3-16** A warning about false teachers and a direct warning to Timothy

**Thursday, 2 Timothy 1:8-17** Timothy is not to be ashamed of the testimony.

**Friday, 2 Timothy 2:14-21** Some direct instruction for Timothy

**Saturday, 2 Timothy 3:14-17** Timothy is to model Paul in his discipleship.

## Scott Engle’s Bible Classes

### **Monday Evening Class**

We are studying the book of Exodus.

Meets from 7:00 to 8:15 in Piro Hall

This class will not meet August 14

### **Tuesday Lunchtime Class**

We are studying Paul’s letter to the Colossians.

Meets from 11:45 to 1:00 in Piro Hall

*About the weekday classes:*

Join us whenever you can. Each week’s lesson stands on its own. This is very “drop-in.” Bring something to eat if you like. Bring a study Bible.

On occasion Scott must cancel class, so if you are coming for the first time, you can check [www.scottengle.org](http://www.scottengle.org) to make sure the class is meeting.

### **Scott’s 10:50 Sunday Class in Festival Hall**

This is a large, lecture-oriented class open to all ages.

Beginning August 20, a new series: *Jesus Behaving Badly*

## Coming in October 2018: A cruise to Israel with Scott & Patti

For more information go to [www.scottengle.org](http://www.scottengle.org)

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<sup>2</sup>Christians do not hold that God dictated the Bible in the same way that Muslims believe God dictated the Quran in Arabic. We believe the Bible is God’s word for his people, yet preserves the genuine collaboration of its human authors.